



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
MARYLAND JUDICIAL CENTER
580 TAYLOR AVENUE
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

MEMORANDUM

To: Persons Seeking Interpreting Assignments in the Maryland Courts

From: Deborah A. Unitus, Manager, Program Services

Date: December 19, 2006

Subject: Mandatory Court Interpreter Orientation Workshop

The Judiciary's 2007 Court Interpreter Orientation Workshops have been scheduled. The workshop dates are listed below and on the attached *Request to Attend the Orientation Workshop on Court Interpreting* form. The workshops will be held at the Judiciary Education and Conference Center in Annapolis, Maryland.

Enrollment in each workshop is limited. Completed registration packages must be received by 4:30 p.m. on the registration deadline date to be considered for the workshop. Applications will be screened and acceptance to the workshop will be based on language, proficiency, education and/or experience and geographic location. Please note that you MUST have prior experience. Applications that do not list professional interpreting experience will be returned. Candidates who are not accepted into the workshop will have their application and fees returned and will need to reapply for the following workshop.

Workshop

March 17-18, 2007
September 8-9, 2007

Registration Deadline

February 26, 2007
August 20, 2007

Registrations received after the above-listed deadline will not be accepted.

To attend the workshop, you must submit a **completed** registration package, which includes: 1) a **completed** *Request to Attend the Orientation Workshop on Court Interpreting* form, 2) a **completed** *Application to Attend the Orientation Workshop on Court Interpreting*, 3) a **completed** *Authorization for Access to Records* and 4) a check or money order in the amount of \$170.00 made payable to the Administrative Office of the Courts. Submit

FRANK BROCCOLINA
STATE COURT ADMINISTRATOR
(410) 260-1295 Fax: (410) 974-2066
frank.broccolina@mdcourts.gov

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ADMINISTRATOR
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Manager
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the completed registration package to:

Administrative Office of the Courts
Maryland Judicial Center, 2nd floor
580 Taylor Avenue
Annapolis, MD 21401
Attn: Program Services

Notice of confirmed reservations (with additional information on the workshop) will be provided to each participant in advance of the scheduled workshop.

Applicants with any questions regarding completion of these forms should contact the Administrative Office of the Courts, Program Services at (410) 260-1291/Maryland Relay Service (800) 735-2258.

Enclosures

Brochure on the Maryland Court Interpreter Program
Request to Attend Orientation Workshop on Court Interpreting
Permission to Release Contact Information
Application to Attend Orientation Workshop on Court Interpreting
Authorization for Access to Records



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS STATE OF MARYLAND



Request to Attend the Orientation Workshop on Court Interpreting

Please Type or Print Legibly. Information on the form **MUST BE COMPLETE**

LANGUAGE(S)/DIALECT(S):

Title:
(Mr./Mrs./ Ms./Dr., etc)

**Last
Name:**

**First
Name:**

M.I.

Current Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

County:

Please accept my completed *Application to Attend the Orientation Workshop on Court Interpreting*. Please consider my application for the date I have indicated below. Hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on the first day and from 9:00 a.m. to approximately 4:30 p.m. on the second day.

☐ **March 17 & 18, 2007** (Deadline February 26, 2007)
(Foreign and Sign Language session)

☐ **Sept. 8-9, 2007** (Deadline August 20, 2007)
(Foreign and Sign Language session)

Payment for registration enclosed (\$170.00 USD), made payable to:
Administrative Office of the Courts

☐ Check

☐ Money Order

I understand that the Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) will send a letter to acknowledge receipt of my application. A second letter will be sent after the deadline date to inform me if I have been accepted and registered for the workshop. I agree to notify the AOC at (410) 260-1291/Maryland Relay Service (800) 735-2258 promptly should it become necessary for me to cancel my confirmed attendance, with the understanding that (1) my tuition payment will not be refunded if notification is given less than 1 week prior to the scheduled class, and (2) that if acceptable cancellation notification is received, my application and fee will be returned to me and I must reapply if I wish to attend any other scheduled workshop.

Signature

Date

Please specify any special accommodation(s) needed to participate in the Orientation Workshop on Court Interpreting due to the Americans with Disabilities Act:

The Maryland State Judiciary is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin, or disability.

For AOC use only:

☐ Accepted
☐ Rejected



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS STATE OF MARYLAND



Application to Attend the Orientation Workshop on Court Interpreting

PLEASE READ INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY: Court interpreting requires much more than being bilingual. You must have native-like proficiency in both the target language and English. If you do not have this proficiency in both languages, it is strongly suggested that you attend educational courses to improve your skills before applying for the orientation workshop. You must submit all seven pages of this application. **INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL BE RETURNED.** Do not leave any fields blank. Please write N/A in fields where the information does not apply. Our office requires all information in order to process your request. Do NOT enclose a resume, photographs or other information not requested. Please do not apply if you do not have relevant experience.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

*Please Type or Print Legibly. Information on the form **MUST BE COMPLETE***

LANGUAGE(S)/DIALECT(S):

Title:

(Mr./Mrs./Ms./Dr./Etc.)

Last

Name:

First

Name:

M.I.

Current Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

County:

Telephone number:

Primary:

Alternate:

E-mail address:

JURISDICTIONS IN WHICH YOU ARE WILLING TO ACCEPT INTERPRETER ASSIGNMENTS:

☐ **Entire State** (May include driving up to 4 hours)

District 1

☐ Baltimore City

District 2

☐ Dorchester County

☐ Somerset County

☐ Wicomico County

☐ Worcester County

District 3

☐ Caroline County

☐ Cecil County

☐ Kent County

☐ Queen Anne's County

☐ Talbot County

District 4

☐ Calvert County

☐ Charles County

☐ St. Mary's County

District 5

☐ Prince George's County

District 6

☐ Montgomery County

District 7

☐ Anne Arundel County

District 8

☐ Baltimore County

District 9

☐ Harford County

District 10

☐ Carroll County

☐ Howard County

District 11

☐ Frederick County

☐ Washington County

District 12

☐ Allegany County

☐ Garrett County

FORMAL EDUCATION

1. My education in the **United States** consists of the following: (Write N/A if not applicable)

School	Name and Location of School	Primary Language of Instruction	Did you receive a degree/diploma?	Diploma/Degree
Elementary or Middle School	_____ _____ _____	_____		
High School or High School Equivalency	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
College or University (Undergraduate)	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
College or University (Graduate)	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____

2. My education in a **foreign country** where the language I want to interpret is spoken consists of the following: (Write N/A if not applicable)

School	Name and Location of School	Primary Language of Instruction	Did you receive a degree/diploma?	Diploma/Degree
Elementary or Middle School	_____ _____ _____	_____		
High School or High School Equivalency	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
College or University (Undergraduate)	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____
College or University (Graduate)	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	_____

LANGUAGE

3. I have lived in an English-speaking country and/or the United States for _____ years.

4. I have lived in a country where my target language is spoken for _____ years.

5. I learned English:

☐ Mostly at home in the U.S.

☐ Mostly at home in my country.

☐ In school.

Please explain _____

6. I learned my target language:

☐ Mostly at home in my country.

☐ Mostly at home in the U.S.

☐ In school.

Please explain _____

FORMAL TRAINING

7. Have you ever been formally trained as an interpreter?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please explain in detail _____

FORMAL TRAINING *(continued)*

8. Have you ever worked formally as an interpreter (NON-LEGAL/COMMERCIAL)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please explain in detail _____

9. Do you have experience interpreting in court or any other legal setting?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please explain in detail _____

SELF-ASSESSMENT

10. Mastery of languages: (Check all that apply)

☐ I possess native-like mastery in *both* English and my second language.

☐ I have wide, general knowledge that is comparable to two years of college or university education in both languages.

☐ My mastery of English is better than my mastery of the second language.

☐ My mastery of my second language is better than my mastery of English.

SELF-ASSESSMENT *(continued)*

11. Have you ever recorded yourself interpreting simultaneously and compared your performance to a transcript of what was said?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, did you: (check the one applicable)

☐ Maintain the pace?

☐ Maintain the pace most of the time?

☐ Omit very little of the original information?

☐ Render the complete meaning of what was said with very few exceptions?

12. If someone reads a descriptive passage, can you remember and repeat what you heard word-for word?

☐ No.

☐ Only if the passage is less than 20 words.

☐ Usually, even if the passage is as many as 30 to 40 words long.

☐ Usually, even when the passage is more than 40 words long.

13. When watching the nightly news on television, can you simultaneously render the newscaster speech into your non-English language without falling behind?

☐ Always.

☐ Most of the time.

☐ Often.

☐ Rarely.

☐ Never.

TRANSLATION EXPERIENCE

14. Are you currently a translator, or are you interested in translation?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, what kind of documents do you translate or expect to translate most frequently (check as many as apply):

☐ Documents for private industry

☐ Birth certificates

List any other

☐ Court documents

☐ Baptism certificates

☐ _____

☐ School grades

☐ Immigration documents

☐ _____

☐ Foreign driver's licenses

☐ Hospital records

☐ _____

☐ Passports

☐ Inspirational material

☐ _____

FOREIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION: *(attach a copy of each certificate)*

15. Do you currently hold any type of certification that may qualify you to work in the courts as a foreign language interpreter? (Federal, State, U.S. State Department, others)

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, please specify the type of certification, location/date of examination and the date of certification.

SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION: *(attach a copy of each certificate)*

16. Do you currently hold any type of certification that may qualify you to work in the courts as a sign language interpreter? (RID: SC:L, CT, CSC, others)

☐ No

If yes, please specify the type of certification, location/date of examination and the date of certification.

PROFESSIONAL INTERPRETER/TRANSLATOR AFFILIATION(S)

17. Please list current memberships or affiliations with professional interpreter or translator organizations:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

18. Please tell us why you have decided to become an interpreter and why you feel you are qualified to be one. (Please do not exceed the space provided). **You must complete this section for your application to be considered.**

[illegible]

**MARYLAND RULES OF PROCEDURE
TITLE 16 – COURTS, JUDGES AND ATTORNEYS
RULE 16-819 COURT INTERPRETERS**

Do you have, in a state or federal court of record, a pending criminal charge or conviction on a charge punishable by a fine of more than \$500 or imprisonment for more than six months unless pardoned or expunged in accordance with law?

☐ YES ☐ NO

NOTICE: A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK IS REQUIRED.

Eligibility to work: Under the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, an employer is required to hire only U.S. Citizens and lawfully authorized immigrant workers. Applicants who are selected for assignments may be required to show and verify authorization to work in the United States.

I am authorized to work in the United States.

☐ YES ☐ NO

I understand that an interpreter who accepts an assignment from a Maryland court is required to comply with the Maryland Code of Conduct for Court Interpreters found in the appendix to Rule 16-819, and may be required to demonstrate competency as evidenced by such criteria as completion of the Court Interpreter Orientation Workshop, passage of a certification examination, or criteria deemed necessary by the Maryland State Judiciary.

Printed name of applicant

Signature of applicant

Date



MARYLAND JUDICIARY
580 TAYLOR AVENUE, BLDG. A-1
ANNAPOLIS, MD 21401

Jurisdiction/Dept.: _____		
Office Location: _____		
Position Type: <input type="checkbox"/> Regular	<input type="checkbox"/> Contractual	<input type="checkbox"/> TEMP
Driving Required:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

AUTHORIZATION FOR ACCESS TO RECORDS
APPLICANT PLEASE READ, COMPLETE AND SIGN

I hereby authorize access to any information about me which may be found in the Criminal Records Central Repository, the Motor Vehicle Administration Driver Records Division, the District Court Systems or any other agency. I hereby authorize the Judiciary to investigate and report on references given by me including former employers, personal references, and educational institutions. I have been advised that this information may be used as a factor for employment consideration. In this connection, the following information is furnished.

Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Maiden Name
Address			City, State, Zip
Date of Birth:	Month	Day	Year
Social Security Number:			Driver's License No.
Race			State Issuing Driver's License:
Gender		Height/Weight	

CONSENT FOR DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

I hereby consent to and authorize the release of personal information from my personal records and/or files.

Signature

Date

APPLICANT DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE

DOES THIS PERSON HAVE A RECORD ON FILE?

(If yes, attach report.) ☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ Criminal Record Attached
☐ YES ☐ NO ☐ MVA Record Attached

Date	Signature of Verifier	Title



ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS
MARYLAND JUDICIAL CENTER
580 TAYLOR AVENUE
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

MEMORANDUM

TO: Court Interpreter Candidates

FROM: Deborah A. Unitus, Manager, Program Services

SUBJECT: Release of Telephone Number(s)

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) receives requests from state agencies, lawyers, community groups, etc. for a copy of our Court Interpreter Registry.

While this office can release the names, it cannot release telephone number(s) without your permission. If you want the AOC to release your contact telephone number(s), you must complete and return this form to:

Administrative Office of the Courts
Maryland Judicial Center
580 Taylor Avenue, Second Floor
Annapolis, MD 21401
ATTN: Program Services Unit

PERMISSION TO RELEASE TELEPHONE NUMBER(S)

The AOC has my permission to release my contact telephone number(s). **PLEASE PRINT.**

Print Name

() _____
Home Telephone Number

Signature

() _____
Cell Phone Number

() _____
Other Phone Number

Street Address, Apt. Number

City State Zip Date

How can I get experience if I am not certified?

Many interpreters begin interpreting in the courts after many years of interpreting informally. In order to gain experience, interpreters must be disciplined and begin studying on their own. Foreign newspapers on the Internet are great resources that allows people to quickly gain access to current texts for sight translation. Court television gives certification candidates the opportunity to take a look into a courtroom and begin familiarizing themselves with terminology and protocol. Recording court television allows a candidate to pause the proceedings and practice consecutive interpretation. An interpreter can use the news or talk shows to practice simultaneous interpretation. In addition, there are many glossaries available on the Internet which will help interpreters to study. Passing the certification exam requires a great deal of studying.

Yes, I want to be an interpreter, now what?

Once you have experience, visit our website at:

<http://www.mdcourts.gov/interpreter/index.html>. If you have no experience, look into different professional organizations that may help you learn about the field.

In addition, here are other websites for reference and self-study:

<http://www.najit.org/>
<http://www.ncsconline.org/>
<http://www.atanet.org/>
<http://www.cps.ca.gov/fcice-spanish/>
<http://www.acebo.com/>

Visit different courthouses and begin familiarizing yourself with the courts. You will find that observing trials and other hearings will help you learn about the legal environment. During your visits, you may meet experienced interpreters who could provide insight into becoming a certified court interpreter.

Court interpreting can be a highly stressful job and most successful candidates are committed professionals who become court interpreters after intensive study and hard work. The work of a court interpreter is rewarded by a dynamic and varied career in the courts. We encourage you to study and then decide whether court interpreting might be for you.



Rev. 1/2007

Administrative Office of the Courts
Program Services
580 Taylor Avenue
Annapolis, MD 21401
(410) 260-1291
Fax: (410) 974-5577



So you'd like to be a court interpreter?



Maryland Court Interpreter Program



WHAT IS A COURT INTERPRETER?

A court interpreter is an individual who possesses native-like proficiency in both English and the target language. They are professionals who are highly skilled in the three modes of court interpreting and are familiar with legal terminology, courtroom protocol and the Maryland Code of Professional Conduct for Court Interpreters. Upon being appointed by the Court, interpreters are required to take an oath, under penalty of perjury to "...interpret accurately, completely, and impartially and to refrain from knowingly disclosing confidential or privileged information obtained while serving in the proceeding." Rule 16-819 (d)(3)

There are three modes of court interpreting:

1. Sight translation – the oral reading of a document from the source language to the target language. The interpreter must read a document, process the information and render it accurately in the target language orally, generally in open court.

2. Consecutive interpreting – used during testimony on the witness stand and when a defendant addresses the Court if the party does not speak English. The interpreter says what is being uttered by each of the parties in the second language, orally without changing or adding anything. This becomes part of the record. Court interpreters must understand and speak legal jargon, street language, slang, and formal language in both English and the target language.

3. Simultaneous interpreting – The interpreter listens to the source language and, at the same time, speaks in the target language for all to hear.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS TO BECOME CERTIFIED AS A COURT INTERPRETER IN MARYLAND?

The Administrative Office of the Courts maintains a Court Interpreter Registry that is distributed to the courts throughout the state. The process towards certification is often a long one and could take years. In order to become certified, the interpreter must take the following steps:

1. Have previous experience as an interpreter.

2. Pass a criminal background check and have no pending criminal charges or convictions on a charge punishable by a fine of more than \$500 or imprisonment for more than six months unless pardoned or expunged in accordance with the law. Rule 16-819 (a)(3)(C)

3. Attend a 2-day orientation workshop on court interpreting that is offered twice a year in Annapolis. There is a fee for the workshop.

4. Pass a written examination on general knowledge of English, legal terminology, courtroom procedures and the Maryland Code of Professional Conduct for Court Interpreters. There is no fee for the written examination.

5. Undergo and rate as "Advanced High" in an Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI). The OPI is a standardized procedure for the global assessment of functional speaking ability. This means that an OPI is a testing method which measures how well a person speaks a language by comparing their performance of specific language tasks, not with some other person's, but with the criteria for each of ten proficiency levels.

The American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) OPI takes the form of a carefully structured conversation between a trained and certified interviewer and the person whose speaking proficiency is being assessed. A ratable speech sample is elicited from the interviewee by an individually determined series of questions or comments, which follow the established ACTFL protocol of "probes" and "level-checks."

6. Pass an oral examination on the three modes of interpreting if available in the target language. There is a fee for the oral examination.

What is the difference between an interpreter and a translator?

An interpreter works with the spoken word, changing it from the source language to the target language. A translator places documents into the target language in writing.

I am a translator, not an interpreter. I translate for members of the community. How do I get certified to be a translator?

The Administrative Office of the Courts administers the Court Interpreter Program and does not certify translators. Many entities in the State of Maryland such as law firms, social service organizations, police departments, government agencies, community groups, hospitals, and interpreter agencies request a copy of the Court Interpreter Registry Release List. Some of these entities may hire interpreters or translators. In order for an interpreter to be included on the Release List, written consent is required. There are currently no plans to certify people as translators.

I speak both English and the target language perfectly, do I still need to take the test?

Yes. The Maryland Judiciary's interpreter program was established in the 1990's to deal with the then, and still escalating need to providing access to justice to the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) population. Without these standards, state courts risk employing unqualified interpreters, leaving equal access to justice by linguistic minorities an unfulfilled obligation.

How long does it take to become an interpreter?

Successful interpreters usually have years of life experience, have traveled extensively and have had contact with many cultures. The actual certification process can take up to a year or longer.

I have an accent, does that matter?

No, court interpreting is truly an equal opportunity field. The richer a person's diversity, the more successful he/she seems to be as an interpreter. However, the main purpose of a court interpreter is communication, so it is imperative that the interpreter's speech be clear, easy to understand and syntactically correct.

Is there an age requirement?

An interpreter must be "... an adult who has the ability to render a complete and accurate interpretation or sight translation, without altering, omitting, or adding anything to what is stated or written and without explanation. A person related by blood or marriage to a party or to the person who needs an interpreter may not act as an interpreter." Rule 16-819 (a)(2).

Is there an education requirement to become certified?

No, but interpreters encounter extremely complex language in the courts. An interpreter's command of the source and the target language is usually at the college level or higher.

Do I have to be a citizen of the United States to become an interpreter?

The courts may only contract people who are legally authorized to work in the United States, but there is no citizenship requirement.

Where would I work?

Interpreters are hired on a contractual basis by the courts and are paid for services provided on an hourly basis. Once on the Court Interpreter Registry, interpreters are called as needed by the courts. Assignments may range from less than an hour to a full day, depending on the type of proceeding. Each interpreter is personally responsible for taxes and his/her own benefits. There is no guarantee that an interpreter will be called for work once included in the Court Interpreter Registry.

What kind of assignments can I expect?

Interpreters are needed in a wide variety of cases which may include criminal cases (murder, rape, robbery), civil matters (divorce, family law, domestic violence), juvenile delinquency, children in need of assistance, termination of parental rights and more.

I don't live in the State of Maryland, can I still get certified?

Residents of Maryland are given priority for any workshop and testing. The certification process is long and expensive.